The Chairman of the Rajya Sabha has referred the Bill to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs for their examination and report. Their report is still awaited.

The Supreme Court in connection with the Writ Petition (Criminal) No.l of 2005 — Country First *Vs.* Union of India & others has sought certain clarifications/ statistics in connection with the proposed insertion of Section 164 B of Cr.P.C. No orders have been passed by the Supreme Court in the case.

(d) Administration of justice is a state subject. Any increase in courts etc. is to be effected by respective State Governments in consultation with the concerned High Court.

Women judges in High Courts and Supreme Court

†802. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of judges in the Supreme Court and different High Courts at present and the number of women judges out of them;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the report of the National Commission for Women which stated that the number of women judges in the Supreme Court and the High Courts is negligible;

(c) if so, the reasons for fewer number of women judges; and

(d) the action being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) A Statement is enclosed *(See* below).

(b) to (d) Appointments of Judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts are made under articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India, respectively, which do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons. After the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record & Anr. *Vs.* Union of India, read with the Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the entire process of initiation of proposal for appointment of a Judge of a Supreme Court lies with the Chief Justice of India and for the appointment of a Judge of a High Court; with the Chief Justice of that High Court.

The Government have, however, addressed letters to the Chief Ministers of the States and the Chief Justices of the High Courts, from time to time, requesting them to locate persons from the Bar belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, other Backward Classes, Minorities and amongst Women who are suitable for appointment as High Court Judges.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

Total number of judges in the Supreme Court and different High Courts

Position as on 6.08.2004

SL No.	Court	Sanctioned strength	No. of Judges in position	No. of Women Judges	No. of male Judges
	SUPREME COURT	26	22	—	22
	HIGH COURTS				
1.	Allahabad	95	76	04	72
2.	Andhra Pradesh	39	31	02	29
3.	Bombay	61	53	05	48
4.	Calcutta	50	42	02	40
5.	Chhattisgarh	08	06	00	06
6.	Delhi	36	32	05	27
7.	Gauhati	23	23	01	22
8.	Gujarat	42	30	03	27
9.	Himachal Pradesh	09	09	00	09
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	14	09	00	09
11.	Jharkhand	12	09	00	09
12.	Karnataka	40	36	01	35
13.	Kerala	29	27	01	26
14.	Madhya Pradesh	42	41	04	37
15.	Madras	46	44	04	40
16.	Orissa	20	14	01	13
17.	Patna	31	31	04	27
18.	Punjab & Haryana	40	35	01	34
19.	Rajasthan	40	37	01	36
20.	Sikkim	3	01	00	01
21.	Uttaranchal	9	09	00	09
	TOTAL:	689	595	39	556

Vacant posts of HC judges

803. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of High Court judges in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that there are number of vacant posts of High Court judges and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether large number of cases are pending in High Courts because of shortage of judges; and.

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to fill the vacant posts?